


ILLAWARRA BIRDS

a photo guide



 Superb Fairy-Wren

Produced by Illawarra Birders
www.illawarrabirders.org



 Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo



 Rainbow Lorikeet

Sulphur-crested Cockatoo



Crimson Rosella





Crested Pigeon

Sometimes wrongly called a Topknot Pigeon (which is a different bird). Makes a distinctive whistling sound when it flies. (42cm)



Laughing Kookaburra

One of the largest members of the kingfisher family – but it doesn't catch fish. When a family group starts their noisy chorus of laughter it's their way of saying 'this is our territory'. (40cm)



Eastern Spinebill

A beautiful honey-eater with a beak designed for probing deep inside flowers to extract their nectar. (16cm)



Little Wattlebird

A noisy wattlebird with no wattles. Common in gardens and heathland, feeding on banksias, grevilleas etc. (28cm)



Grey Butcherbird

So-called as it stores prey in a tree fork, using its hooked beak to tear it up into bite-sized chunks. But it's a handsome bird and sings beautifully! (28cm)



Red-browed Finch

Also known as the Red-browed Firetail, this is the commonest local finch. Firetails are so-called because of their bright red rumps. (12cm)



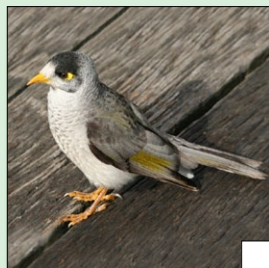
Nankeen Kestrel

The Kestrel, a type of falcon, is the smallest Australian bird of prey. It's one of the few birds that can hover, whilst looking for prey on the ground. (Another is the mainly white Black-shouldered Kite.) (32cm)



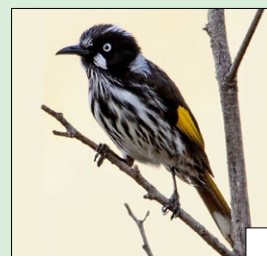
Masked Lapwing

Large plovers are known as lapwings, and this one is the world's largest. This bird was previously known as the Spur-winged Plover on account of the wing spurs which are sometimes visible. (36cm)



Noisy Miner

This native bird has a large repertoire of different calls. It lives in colonies which aggressively exclude other smaller birds. (26cm)



New Holland Honeyeater

Not a shy bird, it likes to sit on top of bushes and advertise its presence. Shares the same habitat as the Little Wattlebird, (18cm)



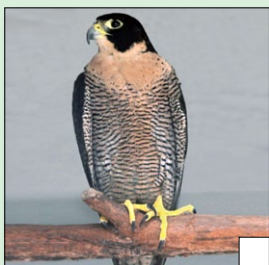
Willie Wagtail

A feisty little bird, ready to take on others many times its size. As well as its rattling alarm call it has one which some say sounds like 'sweet pretty creature'. (21cm)



Welcome Swallow

A master of flight, especially low level, high-speed aerobatics that it uses to vacuum up flying insects. (15cm)



Peregrine Falcon

This awesome bird isn't common, but can be seen in our area, often around escarpment cliffs. When it swoops on its prey from a great height, it is the fastest creature on earth. (42cm)



Satin Bowerbird

The male's famous bower is not a nest. He decorates it with treasures of blue to attract the greenish-brown female. (25cm)



Red Wattlebird

So named because of the red 'wattles' or skin-flaps on its neck. It has a yellow belly and a call that sounds a bit like a barking dog. (35cm)



Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike

Not a cuckoo or a shrike, an older (better!) name is the Shufflewing – which is what it does every time it lands. (33cm)



Magpie-lark

A.K.A. the Peewee. One of the few birds that sings a duet – when you hear their metallic chiming calls it's usually the male and female singing together. (28cm)



Australian Raven

In Australia there are three species of Raven and two crows, all very similar. This is the only one you're likely to find in the Illawarra. (50cm)

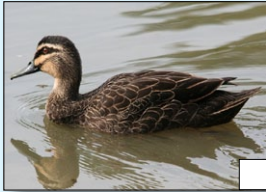
Water & Sea Birds



< Black Swan
Australia's only native swan. It's not all black - when it spreads its wings you will see its white flight feathers. It uses its long neck to reach the aquatic plants that it feeds on.
(120cm)



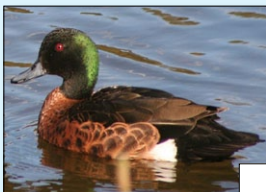
< Australian Wood Duck
Just as likely to be seen on land as on water, sometimes even perching in trees. (Male in foreground).
(46cm)



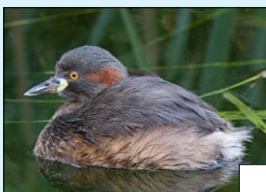
< Pacific Black Duck
Also known as the Painted Duck because of its facial markings - it looks as though it's wearing makeup!
(54cm)



< Wandering Albatross
A magnificent winter visitor to our shores, its 3.5m wingspan is the largest of any bird. The Illawarra's coastal waters are a global hotspot for seabirds.
(120cm)



< Chestnut Teal
Only the male is chestnut. And his head is green. Or black - the colour is iridescent and changes with the light.
(43cm)



< Australasian Grebe
A small waterbird often found with ducks but not related to them. It dives to find food and is so well adapted to life on the water, it has great difficulty walking on land!
(25cm)



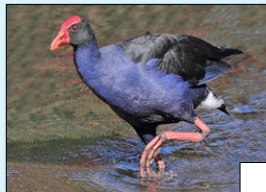
< White-bellied Sea Eagle
Watch out for it majestically patrolling our coastline. With luck you might see it pluck a fish out of the ocean, hardly getting its feet wet.
(80cm)



< Eastern Great Egret
Its enormous neck is longer than its body. Other white Egrets you might see are the Little Egret (smaller and hyperactive when feeding) and the Cattle Egret (following cows!)
(90cm)



< Dusky Moorhen
One of our commonest water birds; in the breeding season its beak is red, with a yellow tip. The similar Coot has a white beak.
(38cm)



< Australasian Swampphen
Bigger and more colourful than the moorhen. Both have a part of the beak that extends over the forehead - this is called their shield.
(46cm)



< Pied Stilt
Stilts live up to their name by having the longest legs (relative to body length) of any bird. Often seen around Lake Illawarra.
(35cm)



< Bar-tailed Godwit
Breeding in Siberia and Alaska, it holds the record for the longest known non-stop migration flight of over 11,000 kms.
(40cm)



< Little Pied Cormorant
Like all cormorants it's not very waterproof, to make diving and catching fish easier. So it has to hang its wings out to dry!
(60cm)



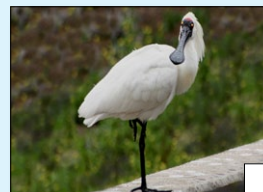
< Great Cormorant
The largest of our four local cormorants - black with a yellow face. (The Little Black Cormorant has an all-black face.)
(82cm)



< White-faced Heron
A common sight near any body of water. Like all herons its neck has a 'hinge' - an adaptation for spearing its prey.
(68cm)



< Australian White Ibis
Its close cousin the Sacred Ibis of Africa which was worshipped by the ancient Egyptians. Look out also for the Straw-necked Ibis which has a black back.
(70cm)



< Royal Spoonbill
The Spoonbill moves its bill from side to side in shallow water to catch fish and other prey. Our other, rarer Spoonbill is the Yellow-billed Spoonbill.
(78cm)



< Australian Pelican
A Pelican's bill really can hold more than its belly can. And the Australian Pelican has the biggest bird bill in the world.
(170cm)



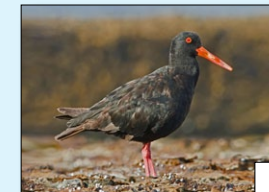
< Eastern Curlew
The world's largest migratory shorebird. Every year it carries its massive downcurved bill all the way to its arctic breeding grounds and back.
(62cm)



< Red-capped Plover
A tiny shorebird found on our beaches and estuaries. When it dashes across the sand it almost appears to be moving on wheels.
(15cm)



< Pied Oystercatcher
Its orange bill doesn't quite match its pink legs. Endangered in NSW, mainly because it builds its nest on beaches where it is open to many threats.
(46cm)



< Sooty Oystercatcher
Unlike the Pied Oystercatcher, it prefers to forage on rock platforms where it uses its massive bill to prise open shellfish.
(46cm)



< Silver Gull
Gulls are pirates, often taking food from other birds, so if one steals your chips it's only behaving naturally!
(40cm)



< Crested Tern
If you see a seagull diving into the ocean and catching fish, then it's probably not a seagull! It is most likely to be a Crested Tern, our commonest tern.
(46cm)

Forest & Woodland Birds



< Brown Cuckoo-Dove

A long-tailed bronze-coloured pigeon. It can be hard to find when sitting quietly in the forest foliage. But its distinctive call - 'did-you-walk' - gives it away. (40cm)



< Green Catbird

Named for its extraordinary call which sounds like a cat miaowing – or even a baby crying! (40cm)



< Grey Fantail

A lively, inquisitive bird - closely related to the Willie Wagtail. Its call is very high-pitched - beyond the hearing of some people. (16cm)



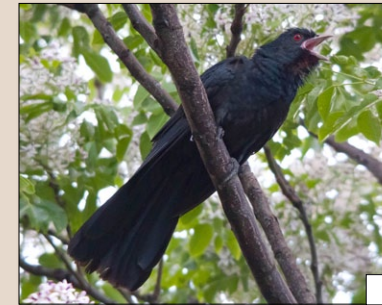
< Wonga Pigeon

Most often seen walking along paths in the rainforest. Its call is a continuous 'whoop-whoop-whoop' - a bit like a reversing truck! (37cm)



< Lewin's Honeyeater

One of many Australian honeyeaters (nectar-feeders), this one has a yellow ear-patch. Its rattling call has been compared to the sound of a machine gun. (20cm)



< Eastern Koel

A member of the cuckoo family. It's distinctive "cooo-ee, coooee" call is a well known sound in the area in the warmer months. (42cm)



< Superb Lyrebird

A spectacular bird and one of the world's best mimics, copying the calls of many other birds. Captive birds have been known to copy the sounds of cars, phones, and even chainsaws. (95cm)



< Eastern Whipbird

Often heard but rarely seen. The 'whipcrack' is the male's call; a 'cheep cheep' afterwards is the reply of an interested female. (28cm)



< Australasian Figbird

The male has a patch of bare skin around its eye which turns bright red in the breeding season. Look out for this bird in fruiting fig trees. (28cm)



< White-throated Treecreeper

Hunts insects by walking up tree trunks from bottom to top; it then flies down and starts again on the next tree. Its call is a piercing, repetitive whistle. (17cm)



< Golden Whistler

This is a classic example of how in many birds the male is very brightly coloured, but the female is a dull brown! (18cm)



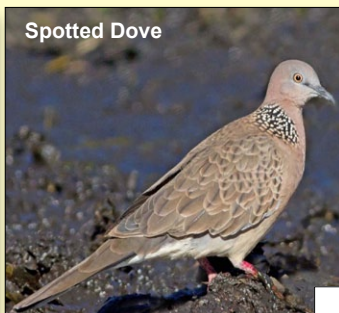
< Eastern Yellow Robin

Yes we do have robins with red breasts in Australia, but they are uncommon here. This is the robin you are most likely to see, often perching on the side of a tree trunk. (16cm)

Introduced Birds - These are some of the birds found locally that have been introduced to Australia by man.



Rock Dove
(Feral Pigeon)



Spotted Dove



Red-whiskered
Bulbul



Common
Starling

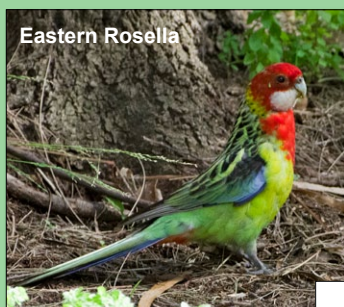


Common
(Indian)
Myna



House Sparrow

Over 350 different kinds of bird have been recorded around the Illawarra. These are some you're most likely to come across – how many have you seen?



Eastern Rosella



Pied
Currawong



Little Corella



Australian
Magpie



Australian
King-Parrot



Galah

KEY

- Numbers in **red** = Approximate length of bird in centimetres from the tip of the bill to the end of the tail.
- To take your interest to the next level...
 - 1. Get some binoculars** - the best you can afford.
You'll be amazed when you see the birds up close.
 - 2. Buy a field guide**, such as the CSIRO Australian Bird Guide, Pizzey & Knight, Slater etc.
Some are available as apps for your phone.
 - 3. Join us on a bird walk.** We welcome guests and will be happy to help you learn more.
Check out our calendar at www.illawarrabirders.org.
Our evening meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month at Coniston Community Centre.



**ILLAWARRA
BIRDERS**

Email: info@illawarrabirders.org

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Text and photos by Martin Potter artwork by Paul Charlier.

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